



SENASA

**FURTHER INFORMATION
REQUESTED BY USDA-APHIS OF
THE INFORMATION PROVIDED BY
SENASA TO ATTAIN RECOGNITION
OF ARGENTINA AS A REGION, AS
DEFINED IN SECTION 92,2, TITLE 9,
OF THE CODE OF FEDERAL
REGULATIONS FOR FOOT AND
MOUTH DISEASE (FMD)**

2004 November

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Authority, organization and infrastructure of the veterinary services organization in the region

1. How do veterinarians become licensed to work in Argentina?

Veterinarians in Argentina, after obtaining the degree title shall authenticate it at the Ministry of Culture and Education. Afterwards, the professional is registered at the National or Provincial Professional Association of Veterinary Physicians, according to the jurisdiction where they will be working, who assigns them the licence. Licence, both national and provincial, is mandatory.

2. How many private veterinarians are authorized to do official government work on FMD, and how are they authorized?

Veterinarians have been part of the Eradication Program since it was launched through their Professional Associations or Councils that participate as members of the CONALFA, the Regional Committees (COPROSAS) and Local Animal Health bodies.

In Argentina there are approximately 13,000 veterinary physicians of which 5,950 are accredited by SENASA to carry out health activities for the Brucellosis Eradication Program and to certify Brucellosis free holdings, and 4,924 are accredited for the Tuberculosis program. All veterinarians are authorized for all **sanitary programs** including FMD.

Veterinarians in private practice are continuously in contact with, and provide information to the farmers regarding the required animal health measures. In

addition they participate in the National Epidemy-Surveillance System (Resolution N° 234/96).

The 'National Private Veterinary Physician Registry' was created by SENASA Resolution N° 1067/94. Registry on the Register is annual and the professional has to have the license up to date. SENASA issues the 'Registry Veterinarian' certificate and guarantees the necessary training for the correct performing of the duties.

There is a dispatch pre-inspection for bovines intended for export to the European Union, carried out by private veterinarians, who verify the sanitary status of the animals and the documents of the premises, issuing a sanitary pre-certificate which is later endorsed by the local veterinarian. The local veterinarian is responsible for the record keeping of these professionals.

3. Is specialized training in foreign animal diseases mandatory, and how often must a veterinarian attend such training?

As expressed in the answer to the previous question, it is concluded that private veterinarians are part of the epidemiological surveillance system for diseases of mandatory notification as sensors. As soon as they take part of the sanitary programs carried out by SENASA, they have to comply with a continuous training program, being trained on the procedures and standards in force.

4. Do private or government veterinarians or animal health specialists need to meet certification requirements to conduct official animal health program and/or FMD control activities?

In the case of private veterinarians see questions N° 2 and 3.

With regards to official veterinarians the conditions for the fulfilment of the official programs are determined by the compliance of training and up-dating activities established by the National Plan.

Sanitary Education can be mentioned within the main strategies that define the "FMD ERADICATION PLAN". This **strategy** includes training activities for the different participants of the program (technicians and administrative staff) and promotion of the different activities of the plan.

The content of the courses meets the technical guidelines established by the FMD National Eradication Plan and the specific bibliography of the OIE/PAHO/FAO.

Likewise, professionals are comprised in the guidelines of the TRAINING OPERATIVE PLAN, established by SENASA and the CIVIL SERVICE NATIONAL INSTITUTE, which includes different subjects, in addition to FMD, such as: Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy and other TSE, Cross-Border diseases, Brucellosis, Tuberculosis, Farm diseases (Trichinosis, Classical Swine Fever, Newcastle, Avian Influenza, etc.). The programs are carried out by experts and teachers from SENASA and other institutions through agreements with national universities, research institutes such as INTA (National Institute for Agricultural Technology) and others (FAO, INPPAZ, etc.).

During the past years, several training activities were developed within the Plan. The main activities are detailed below:

TRAINING ACTIVITIES YEAR 2001

	NUMBER	PARTICIPANTS
COURSES - TECHNICAL MEETINGS	14	945
PLANS PROMOTION	21	288

TOTAL OF ACTIVITIES: 35 - TOTAL OF PARTICIPANTS: 1233

TRAINING ACTIVITIES YEAR 2002

DATE	PLACE	PARTICIPANTS	SUBJECTS
08/05/2002	Paso de los Libres (Corrientes)	8	Characterization of Border zone
03/07/2002	Villa Mercedes (San Luis)	12	Vaccination Plans
18/07/2002	San Rafael (Mendoza)	4	Sanitary Management System
21/08/2002	Mercedes (Corrientes)	19	Sanitary Information Systems
11/09/2002	R. Del Tala (E. Ríos)	18	Sanitary Management System
12/09/2002	Resistencia (Chaco)	4	Vaccination Campaigns
25/09/2002	Lazareto (Capital Federal)	15	Vaccination Campaigns
10/10/2002	Bolivar (Buenos Aires)	15	Sanitary Regulations
10/10/2002	E. Castex (La Pampa)	10	Vaccination Plans
10/10/2002	Villa María (Córdoba)	15	Epidemiological Surveillance
11/10/2002	Lobos (Buenos Aires)	16	Epidemiological Surveillance
13/10/2002	Guaquaychú (E. Ríos)	9	Characterization of Border zone
15/10/2002	Neuquén (Neuquén)	8	Information Systems at Barriers
16/10/2002	Resistencia (Chaco)	25	Sanitary Alert in

			Paraguay
17/10/2002	La Paz (E. Rios)	20	Sanitary Standards
14/11/2002	Rio Grande (T. del Fuego)	17	Sanitary Leveling
TOTALNUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS			
IN COURSES:		215	

01/09/2002	Off-site	344	FMD Epidemiology
15/08/2002	SENASA Headquarters (Capital Federal)	43	FMD Epidemiology

COURSES 2003	DATE	PLACE	PARTICIPANTS
FMD Seroepidemiology Up-date	03/10/2003	Córdoba	39
FMD Seroepidemiology Up-date	22/10/2003	Corrientes	44
FMD Seroepidemiology Up-date	12/11/2003	Tandil	41
FMD Epidemiological Surveillance Up-date	03/10/2003	Córdoba	39
FMD Epidemiological Surveillance Up-date	22/10/2003	Corrientes	44
FMD Epidemiological Surveillance Up-date	12/11/2003	Tandil	41
Total (6 courses)			124

COURSES 2004	DATE	PLACE	PARTICIPANTS
FMD Epidemiology Technical Up-date	25/02/2004	Viedma	24
FMD Epidemiology Technical Up-date	26/02/2004	R. Colorado	22
Course on Animal Health Induction	19/03/2004	Buenos Aires	15
Course Basic Epidemiology Up-date	30/04/2004	Formosa	18
FMD Seroepidemiology Tools	16/06/2004	Tucumán	35
FMD Epidemiological Surveillance Up-date	18/06/2004	Tucumán	35
FMD Seroepidemiology Tools	06/07/2004	San Luis	36
FMD Epidemiological Surveillance Up-date	08/07/2004	San Luis	36
Continuous Education Project Islands Micro-characterization Project	Ongoing	Buenos Aires	1

Continuous Education Project S. Luis Micro-characterization Project	Ongoing	Buenos Aires	1
Total (10 Courses)			221

Seminars and Lectures Assisted/Lectured	DATE	PLACE	PARTICIPANTS
OPS SIV-CONT Seminar	09/03/2004	Martínez	2
Cosalfa Seminar	03/04/2004	Bolivia	2
OIE International Conference	14/04/2004	Buenos Aires	4
III Argentine Congress on Zoonosis	15/04/2004	Buenos Aires	4
I Forum of Scientific Technical Interchange of the DNSA	15/07/2004	Buenos Aires	22
Total (5 Five)			34

***5. Please provide information on functions carried out by the
National Agrifood Inspection Service DNFA.***

At a national level, DNFA is responsible for ensuring that slaughterhouses, processing plants, and/or storage facilities for animal and plant products and by-products (whether edible or inedible), comply with hygiene and health requirements. DNFA is also responsible for approving all establishments that slaughter and/or process products derived from farm animals. The Veterinary Inspection Services are responsible for said controls and approved plants throughout the country that process for export and for the domestic market. International Traffic Direction with the Co-ordination of Borders and Federal Traffic takes part in DNFA.

6. How many veterinarians, inspectors, and support personnel are employed by the department? What is the DNFA infrastructure in the region proposed for evaluation?

At slaughterhouses of primary inspection, there are 325 official veterinarians and 870 official assistant veterinary technicians who perform the ante mortem and post mortem inspections of the animals sent to slaughter.

7. What type of biosecurity controls exist at slaughtering plants approved for export?

According to the Argentine regulations, by Decree 4238/68, biosecurity controls in the plants approved by SENASA are as follows:

Pens: animals are kept within pens and cannot be moved from the slaughterhouse after their entry.

Effluent treatment: all effluents from the coldstore (pens, slaughtering yard, and water used in all the processes) are treated separating solids, fats, liquids and chlorinates before releasing them to the general sewage system.

Pens sanitary complex:

Dead animals are treated at the necropsy digester, with skin, after diagnosis. Fallen animals are slaughtered at the emergency yard and are not used for export.

The sanitary complex effluents are individually treated (disinfection) before dumping them to the rest of the common treatments.

Raw slaughter wastes:

They are sent to processing plants with thermal treatments, for non-edible use, in closed vehicles approved for that purpose.

They may be processed at the same plant in Melters or digestors with thermal treatment to make non-edible by-products.

Slaughter pathology wastes: they are processed in digestors with atmosphere saturated with pressure steam or in Melters to obtain by-products.

8. On page 5 of your submission, it was mentioned that the local animal health offices gather information that serves to strengthen the official inspection system of livestock operations. Please provide details of the kind of information that is gathered and provide examples of how this information is used to strengthen the official inspection system for FMD.

SENASA local offices have a Sanitary Management system where the actions carried out by the local veterinarian are recorded. All the information related to movements, both ingoing and outgoing and RENSPA number, as well as destination, producer, coldstore, dates, participating veterinarians, etc., is recorded.

9. It was also mentioned that the local animal health offices represent various local organizations and have technical subcommittees that are chaired by official or private veterinarians. What are these local organizations and their functions?

The 318 local SENASA Offices are strategically distributed throughout the country and take part of the Official Veterinarian Service to carry out the decentralized operative actions. These offices have para-technicians and administrative staff, who report to a local veterinarian. Furthermore, there are Local Sanitary Entities, which are ONGs that operate as foundations, associations, societies, etc., created through SAGPyA Resolution N° 108/2001. These entities are the result of the cattle producers active participation in the FMD eradication and are authorized by SENASA. They are formed by an Administrative Committee, constituted by livestock producers and other bodies representing the production sector, as well national, provincial or municipal representatives related to animal health. A Technical Committee chaired by the SENASA Veterinarian and formed by the Veterinarians of the Local Sanitary Entity area. This committee carried out the sanitary plans set up by SENASA, specially the FMD vaccination campaign. An Operative Group formed by co-ordinators, programmers and vaccinators who carried out the vaccination in the establishments.

10. What type of structure, composition, and functions do the technical committees have?

The Technical Committees of the Sanitary Struggle Local Entities are formed by provincial, municipal and private professionals, technicians, officials (SENASA local Veterinary) who assess local possibilities and characteristics for implementing the Local Vaccination Plans established by SENASA that shall be carried out by the Operative Group.

11. What practices, if any, are in place with regard to the control and/or prohibition of swill feeding? If swill feeding is allowed, is heat treatment mandatory?

SENASA Resolution N° 225/95 that regulates holding and maintenance of pigs is in force. This standard bans pigs feeding with: raw viscera of any origin, kitchen garbage, hospital, clinics and/or nursing homes garbage, national and/or international ports and airports garbage.

Feeding of pigs with rests of food substances of animal origin coming from stores approved by the competent authority to manufacture and/or sell food is authorized. Authorization is conditioned to the compliance of the following requirements:

- a) That swill feeding be subjected to a cooking process guaranteeing destruction of pathogen organisms where pigs are fed.
- b) The existence in the premise of the equipment necessary to carry out the requirements of the previous point, with an operation capacity allowing treatment of all the rests in a period of time not longer than eight (8) hours since entry.

12. How is compliance, monitored and enforced?

SENASA Resolution N° 350/98 establishes a mechanism making the SENASA veterinarians duties easier with regards to confiscation of animals infected with Trichinellosis or constituting a risk because they do not have the necessary sanitary-hygienic conditions, due to failure to comply with the previously mentioned, SENASA Resolution N° 225/95.

At this moment, work is being done on a regulation gathering the previous one, to regulate pig activity and widening the scope of the current one with the purpose of having all the elements to allow trichinellosis control. As a consequence of this, there will be more elements going beyond this disease and granting additional guarantees in the case of FMD.

***13. Does Argentina have establishments authorized to process swill?
What are the requirements for this authorization?***

There are no establishments exclusively approved to process swill. Treatments to process food are carried out by the pig producer in the establishment or the producer obtains the processed swill from slaughtering establishments.

On the other hand, SENASA Resolution N° 895 of 23/12/2002 rules the approval of treatment systems of swill coming through our frontier posts. The SENASA inspector, according the risk of the origin of the swill or if that are swills of a specific risk shall recommend the treatment to guarantee its destruction.

The requirements for the treatment complies with the OIT recommendations, which are considered a strong guarantee of the BSE agent reduction. As it is

the agent with the highest requirements for its destruction, it may be a parameter for this disease prevention as for any other agent with a potential risk for animals and human health.

14. What laws does Argentina have in place to regulate movements of used farm machinery across regions in Argentina, or across international borders, or from regions of higher risk to regions of lower risk?

There are not specific regulations for farm machinery.

The former SENASA Resolution N° 809/81 establishes, among other aspects, the washing and disinfection of livestock vehicles, transiting empty or with animals on the hoof, in all livestock movements in the country.

Disinfection is carried out in all the freight transports (including farm machinery) and it is performed at random in automobiles, in all the entry points to the country and entry points to the free areas where vaccination is not practiced. These points are sanitarily approved by SENASA and are located at certain risk borders.

In case of emergency or outbreaks this disinfection is carried out in all vehicles, including farm machinery.

15. What are the cleaning and disinfection requirements for trucks, vehicles, or any other equipment?

The Resolution 809 of 1982 establishes the cleaning and disinfection requirements for livestock vehicles in plants approved by SENASA. A

certificate in triplicate is issued laying down that the cleaning and disinfection have been carried out. This document must be submitted by the driver when required by sanitary authorities as police or National Border Police. This document should also be required by the producer, livestock agent as well as in the farm, or place where the animals shall be delivered, whenever a cattle transport is fulfilled.

Disease Status

Please provide more information on the FMD outbreaks in 2001 and 2002:

16. Define outbreak and indicate how infection was detected in each outbreak.

Outbreak: Holding where animals with MFD are.

In all cases the detection of an outbreak arose from the notification about the existence of animals with symptoms confusable with vesicular disease. Tissues samples were taken from these animals for virus and serum isolation and detection of antibodies against non-structural proteins of FMD virus.

17. How long is it likely that the infection was present before the detection, and how was it introduced? How long after detection were trading partners notified?

The first cases of FMD detected in 2000 were wrongly diagnosed by private veterinarians as Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis IBR or Bovine Viral Diarrhea. The wrong diagnosis delayed the implementation of measures to hold down the disease thus easing its spreading to other holdings.

First cases were recorded by late July, 2000.

Argentina acknowledged internationally the disease in March, 2001.

The way the disease was introduced in the country in 2000 has not been fully elucidated. Nevertheless, the analysis of the information regarding typing of acting virus, the areas affected at the beginning of the epidemic and the characteristics of the border areas at the north of the country, the most probable hypothesis is that the virus may have been introduced through the illegal traffic of infected animals from neighboring countries.

The only outbreak recorded in 2002 was reported on January 5 and responded the following day. According to the lesions that were found, the disease should have appeared 10 days before. As soon as the diagnosis was confirmed, it was internationally notified (OIE, Panafosa and trading partners).

The origin of the infection of this outbreak was not found in the research carried out. Nevertheless, the researches showed that the disease may have been the result of the virus residual activity in the area, due to both the short time passed since the last outbreak and the poor vaccination record of the holding.

At present Argentina notifies immediately to the international community any suspicion of a vesicular disease, before confirming the diagnosis.

18. Provide data on the number of sick animals and herds by species, week, and province over the course of the disease outbreaks.

See tables in Annex I Number of sick animals 2000-2001-2002-2003.

19. Did any of the outbreaks occur in known vaccinated herds (vaccinated once or twice) or in export-approved slaughterhouses?

Yes, there were outbreaks in holdings previously vaccinated. In these cases vaccination has been carried out in a period ranging from 15 to 120 days before the outbreak.

Nevertheless, these outbreaks appeared at the beginning of massive vaccination implementation.

At present, the records of 7 vaccination campaigns and the ongoing 8th, plus the immunity levels showed in national serology samples, are enough elements to deduce the impossibility of the virus circulation.

With regards to the disease in slaughterhouses, two cases were detected through the post mortem observation of tongue lesions.

The local office of the cattle area was notified in each case, to take measures in the holdings where the animal came from.

20. What specific measures were taken to prevent the spread of FMD to other farms?

The following measures to prevent the infection spreading are taken in holdings where suspect or confirmed FMD animals were found.

- Delimitation of the focal, perifocal and surveillance area;
- Restraint to move susceptible species within and out the holdings of the area;
- Restrictions on people and vehicles movements;
- Establishment of check and disinfection points at the exit of the affected holding/s and in neighboring roads.
- Ring vaccination of all susceptible species in a parcel lot depending on the area.
- Slaughter of affected animals and contacts: this measure was implemented at the beginning of the outbreak (according to Resolution N° 478/99); afterwards this measure was not longer practiced due to the number of cases and its spreading. The sanitary slaughter was implemented again at the last outbreaks in 2001, and in those occurred in 2002 and 2003 (SENASA Resolution N° 35/2002).

21. What procedures does Argentina have in place for controlling FMD outbreaks detected in slaughterhouses?

The cases with lesions compatible with FMD in slaughterhouses were prompt reported to the local office of the area in order the local veterinary could visit the establishment of origin immediately.

Procedure in the slaughterhouse: PROCEDURES MANUAL FOR FMD OUTBREAK RESPONSE – ITEM Detection of outbreak and/or suspicion of vesicular disease in slaughterhouses, coldstores and Terminal

Concentrating Markets (See **Annex II Procedures Manual for FMD Outbreak Response**).

Decree 4238 and its modifications establishes that in case of FMD detection the following numerals should be followed:

10.3. When FMD is confirmed in pens, activities shall be halted in the plant and the SENASA office responsible of the establishment area shall be notified to take the relevant measures.

Veterinary Inspection of the establishment. Actions

10.3.1 Until the National Animal Health and Agrifood Quality Service (SENASA) responsible of the establishment area visits the plant, the Veterinary Inspection Service shall:

- 1) Halt the ingoing and outgoing of animals, raw materials and products;
- 2) Halt the movement of freight vehicles and other vehicles;
- 3) Take the necessary measures to prevent the virus spreading by the person who is in the plant.

Pens disinfection

10.3.2 Pens, streets, wallows that may be infected by the FMD virus, shall be disinfected with a watery solution of sodium hydroxide at 2% (caustic soda) of 94% purity recently prepared or sodium hypochlorite with 5000 parts by one million active chlorine as minimum, or any other product approved by the National Animal Health and Agrifood Quality Service (SENASA).

Slaughtering yard

11.5.6 If FMD is discovered in the slaughtering yard, the Veterinary Inspection Service shall follow the proceedings stated in numeral 10.3.1 of the present Rules of Procedure. The National Animal Health and Agrifood Quality Service (SENASA) shall decide the actions that will be carried out.

22. Describe control activities that took place in the focal, perifocal, and surveillance zones during the outbreaks. How were affected and exposed animals handled? Were there differences in control procedures according to the affected species?

Focal area: At the start of 2000-2001, outbreak sanitary slaughter of infected animals and direct contacts was applied. Afterwards, this strategy proved to be impracticable due to the extent and spreading of the disease. Consequently, the only control applied in this area was the restraint of livestock movements until the risk of infection ended.

Perifocal Area: Restrain of movements; ring vaccination; periodic inspections; serological samples; check and disinfection posts.

Surveillance or buffer area: Restraint, periodical inspections, vaccination, serological samples, setting up of control and disinfection posts.

Furthermore, as a result of the extent and spreading of the outbreak, some areas were restrained; the suspected animal movements were banned excepting those that would be slaughtered.

Regarding the different infected species, all received the same treatment, included vaccination, in contrast to systematic vaccination that is only applied on bovines.

23. What, how many, and on whom (e.g. farmers, veterinarians, laboratories, etc.) were penalties imposed for non-compliance with reporting requirements?

Taking into account that in this period the attitude was the notification of every FMD-like disease and as it was not detected that the notification would have been concealed, there were no punishments.

Decree 643/1996 - ARTICLE 50. — Spontaneous or immediate notification of FMD existence or suspicion, supported by strict compliance of sanitary standards arising from Law N° 24.305, shall bring the following benefits:

- a) Immediate advise of the NATIONAL ANIMAL HEALTH SERVICE.
- b) Those foreseen in **article 14 of Law Ley N° 24.305.**

Law N° 24.305

ARTICLE 14. – SENASA shall compensate, at the market value, the producers affected by the measures adopted within the framework of article 2° subsection f) of this law or by the determining exclusive destination to slaughter due to sanitary reasons.

The Budget National Law shall foresee a specific sum of money to attend this expenditures.

The regulation shall establish the period to make effective this compensations, period that will not be longer than thirty (30) days, as from the resolution establishing the slaughter or sale for slaughtering.

If, afterwards, the people responsible of the problem which gave origin to the measure are determined by certain, they shall pay for the compensations.